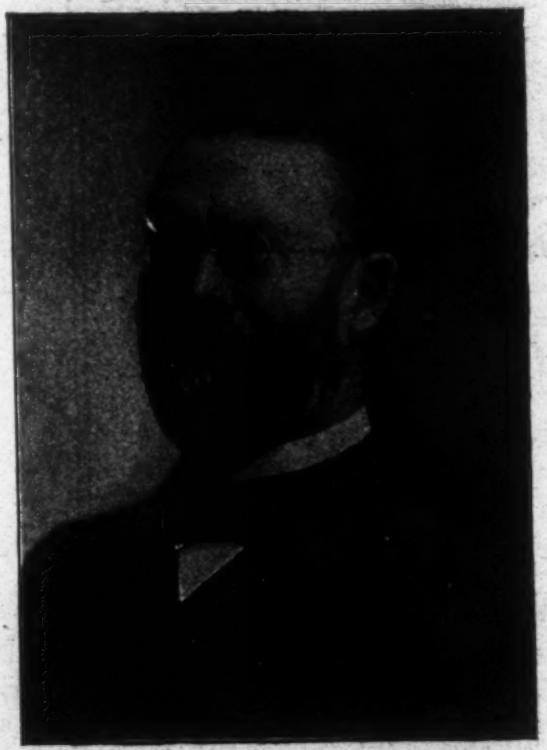
Rev. SHELDON JACKSON, D.D.



A PROGRESSIVE MISSIONARY

When the future historian writes the religious annals of this backbone of our continent (the Rocky Mountains) he will give the foremost place to Sheldon Jackson, the pioneer of the cross.

Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D.

You are one of my heroes, you have stood for all our Gospel means, not in a luxurious parish or splendid college, but out yonder on the edge of things where God's most friendless children turn toward you the eyes of pathos and hope.

Tribute to Sheldon Jackson by Frances E. Willard.

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Sheldon Jackson, D.D. — A Progressive Missionary

INTO one life is seldom crowded so much of stirring adventure and accomplishment as is held in the fifty years' missionary service of the "frontier apostle," Sheldon Jackson.

A local newspaper once described him as "Short, bewhiskered and bespectacled. By inside measurement a giant." A thrill, surpassing that which accompanies childhood's fascination for giants is felt as one senses the wonderful forces that were set in motion by this mighty man of God. Like the giants of fairy tales, he was undaunted by obstacles; unlike these giants, overcoming obstacles, not by a magic word or wonderful physical strength, but by marvelous courage and self-denial, patience and persistency, and in the strength of Jehovah. Almost a million miles he travelled, not in Pullman coaches and ocean liners, but afoot or "bumping and jolting over execrable roads or dimly outlined trails, on horseback, by rail and stage-coach, by buckboard and army ambulance, by lumber wagon and mule-team and ox-cart, by broncho and reindeer sledge, by freight and construction train, or on water routes by steamship and dugout, by launch and canoe, revenue cutter, war vessel, schooner or cattle ship."

"His narrow escapes are among the marvels of personal experience. Five times the stage was robbed just before he had passed over the route; once there was only the motion of a finger between him and death as a half dozen revolvers were pointed at him; once he escaped scalping by Apaches on the warpath only by a few hours; again he went unharmed when his steamer on the upper Missouri was fired into by hostile Indians; again a fanatical papal mob threatened his life; and he was once delivered from prison, where he had been thrust for the gospel's sake."

Presbyterian Historical Society
425 Lombard Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19147

The following sketch has been prepared by Mrs. Elizabeth Patton Brady, wife of John G. Brady, ex-Governor of Alaska.

An Alaskan Chief's Son

FROM the day when, like Samuel of old, he was solemnly dedicated to the *service* of the Lord, neither the boy Sheldon Jackson, nor his parents, had any other thought than that he was to be a minister of the Gospel.

His parents' desire was his inspiration; their training, an infusion of the diligence, alertness, courage, persistency, and love of souls which so characterized his life of service.

A devout Scotch Presbyterian district schoolmaster helped fasten his holy purposes, which were held unswervingly through academic and college years. It was not until he was in Union College that he made public profession of his faith, though he said he could not remember a time when he had not endeavored to lead a Christian life. In his theological studies at Princeton, he was associated with many who were offering their lives for mission work in home and foreign fields, his own attitude toward service being evinced by the text of his first sermon, the keynote of this devoted, heroic, successful life, "The love of Christ constraineth us."

The American Systematic Beneficence Society claimed his services soon after he was licensed to preach, and as their agent he was closely associated with many noble men and women who were ever afterward ready to uphold his hands and supply the funds necessary to meet emergencies that arose in the development of his lifework.

Nothing daunted by the adverse report of the examining physician, on whose advice his application for foreign mission service was rejected, Dr. Jackson turned

with prodigious and untiring activity, unbounded faith in God and a wonderful love for his fellowmen, into the Home field, and began a work at the Mississippi River, a work which he carried westward and northward until it reached even unto the shores of Siberia.

In all his labors, extending over half a century, he was cheered and strengthened by his wife, ever devoted to him, and earnest, active and self-sacrificing in personal Christian service.

"When he entered upon his pioneer work in 1858, California was the only State west of the Missouri River. He was one of that noble band of pioneers who carved Presbyteries out of the wilderness and erected Synods before the foundations of civil government were laid." Gifted with a prophetic vision, he realized the immense possibilities of the great West at the beginning of its development, and exerted every influence within his power to possess the land for Christ and the Church. Often the missionary was located and the Church established with the coming of the first immigrants. Around such centers rallied the friends of law and order, morality and religion; here grew Christian communities and the foundations of civic righteousness were laid.

In this earnest conquest, opportunities were sometimes presented that led Dr. Jackson beyond the prescribed limits of the territory under his charge, and on such occasions it devolved upon the Board to extend the boundaries to include the new work.

To Dr. Jackson is due the honor of having placed the first missionary of the Presbyterian Church in Utah. Hearing of a disaffection in the ranks of the "Saints," he made bold to enter the Mormon strongholds. Believing that the younger generation if properly enlightened would not cling to the teachings and practices of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, he started educational work in their midst and there founded and endowed Westminster College.

Realizing that the agency of the Christian school was needed to prepare the way for the preaching of the gospel to Mormons, Mexicans and Indians, he set

Shaman, or Medicine Man

about arousing the Church to supply this need. Several schools in Arizona and New Mexico were made possible by a little band of devoted women from different denominations, but it became evident that to carry on this educational work effectively a great central agency was necessary. Accordingly, the Woman's Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church was organized and its educational work became one of the most powerful agencies of the Church for the evangelization of the home-land. In a notable anniversary address in 1904, Mrs. Darwin R. James, then president of the Woman's Board of Home Missions, paid a glowing tribute to Dr. Jackson, setting forth the important part he had taken in the organization and work of the Board.

For many years requests had come from Alaska that missionaries be sent there. In the year 1877, in a most unexpected manner it became possible for Dr. Jackson to heed this far-away call.

Sent out on a special tour of investigation of the western mission fields, he found that a revolt of the Nez Perces Indians, under Chief Joseph, made part of his work impossible. While the instructions from the Board confined his work to the organized field, he had divine authority to "carry the good tidings to the uttermost parts of the earth." With time at his disposal, he did not

hesitate to subordinate the lower to the higher command. Proceeding to Portland, Oregon, he there embarked for Alaska, establishing upon arrival at Fort Wrangel, the first Presbyterian Mission, and placing in charge Mrs. A. R. McFarland who had accompanied him from Portland.

With characteristic energy Dr. Jackson set about awakening the Church and the nation to a sense of responsibility for the welfare and enlightenment of a long neglected people. As authorized agent of the newly formed Woman's Board, he soon collected funds and stationed teachers and missionaries at a number of points in southeastern Alaska. A home for girls was built in connection with the mission at Fort Wrangel. In Sitka where the Home for Indian Boys, just opened, was destroyed by fire, he personally superintended the reconstruction of an abandoned cannery, which was the nucleus of the Sitka Industrial Training School. Churches and school-houses were built, congregations formed, and the Presbytery of Alaska was organized.

While intensely loyal to the Church which commissioned him, he gladly lent a helping hand to every agency which had for its object the extension of Christ's kingdom. This was emphatically shown when he called together the Secretaries of the Home Boards of the different church societies and planned a division with them of the Alaskan field. Nor was the service which he rendered the people of Alaska limited to religious work. From the beginning he urged the establishment of public schools and some form of government that would give protection to life and property. His efforts were rewarded when, in 1884, a limited form of government was provided and an appropriation was made for the installation of a public school system. Under General John Eaton, United States Commissioner of Education, the Alaska division of the Bureau of Education was established, and Dr. Jackson was appointed by the United States government General Agent of Education for Alaska.

Soon came opposition from an unexpected source. Some newly appointed government officials actively opposed the work of the missionaries and stirred

Eskimo Mother and Child

up such disaffection among the natives, that many children were removed from the school at Sitka and the lives of Dr. Jackson and other missionaries were threatened.

By skilful manipulation of a grand jury, some members of which had little knowledge of the English language, five indictments were secured against Dr. Jackson and placed on the docket for trial. Under pretext that he was likely to go away to escape trial, he was arrested and locked in a prison cell until his bond was greatly increased. As soon as these facts were made known, President Cleveland promptly removed the government officials who were connected with this unseemly act, and all indictments against Dr. Jackson were dismissed. He established government schools in southeastern and western Alaska, and in 1890 carried the work into Arctic Alaska, there establishing mission schools, partly supported by different church societies and partly by the government.

By permission of the Secretary of the Treasury, Dr. Jackson had the privilege of visiting the Arctic sections of his field on the United States revenue cutter Bear. He found the natural food supply of the Eskimo greatly depleted and realized that some means of subsistence must be provided for them. On the Siberian side he saw the natives with an unfailing food supply in their herds

of domestic reindeer. The moss-covered tundra in Alaska would afford grazing ground for millions of these animals. He appealed to the government for an appropriation. Failing to secure this, he went to friends, who were ready to assist him in such emergencies, secured funds, and started the Reindeer Industry for the starving Eskimo. Under great opposition he carried this work forward and later secured the coöperation and support of the government. Dr. Jackson made thirty-two trips to Siberia in the interests of this industry, which is now well established and is doing its part along with the church and school in civilizing the Eskimo. This work alone is enough to win for him the praise of all lovers of humanity, and rank him as one of the greatest benefactors of the age.

Reindeer Herd in Alaska

Sheldon Jackson Museum, Sitka, Alaska

At Sitka Dr. Jackson organized the Society of Natural History and Ethnology and built a fireproof Museum, in which he placed a unique and valuable collection of native curios and relics that can never be duplicated.

It is most fitting that in Alaska where he endured persecution and imprisonment for the cause of Christ should be reared a worthy monument to his memory in the Sheldon Jackson School, at Sitka.

In 1897 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church conferred upon this noble missionary the highest honor within its power, that of making him its Moderator.

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